

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 14, 15, 18 and 20 have been amended. Claims 1-6, 14, 15, 18 and 20 are pending. Claims 7-13, 16, 17, 19 and 21 are non-elected. Claims 1, 14, 18 and 20 are independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6, 14, 15, 18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No 5,448,760 to Fredrick. This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1-6, 14, 15, 18 and 20, as amended.

The present invention, as defined by representative amended claim 1, is directed to a system comprising a number of elements in combination. Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a system for managing a networked office automation device (such as a copier, a printer, etc.) that is arranged and networked in a work place. The system comprises verification means, information acquisition means, and information storage means. The verification means verifies operation of the office automation device by a verified user in the work place. The information acquisition means acquires device usage information including a value indicating an amount of usage of the office automation device by the verified user. The information storage means sequentially stores the device usage information acquired by the information acquisition means.

The present invention, as defined by the amended claims, manages office automation devices (usage amount, etc.) in a work place. A similar a system for managing a networked office automation device that is arranged and networked in a work place is neither disclosed nor suggested in Frederick. In clear contrast to the present invention, Frederick discloses a system for verifying a cellular phone. More specifically, Frederick discloses a technique for eliminating unauthorized use of a cellular phone when an electronic serial number (ESN) and a mobile identification number (MIN) are fraudulently altered. In addition, Frederick's system comprises configurations necessary for verifying a cellular phone such as verification means, information acquisition means, information storage means, etc. However, Frederick's invention is greatly different from the present invention, which is for managing office automation devices (usage amount, etc.) in a work place. There is no teaching or suggestion in Frederick of a system for managing a networked office automation device (such as a copier, a printer, etc.) that is arranged and networked in a work place.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 116692000300.

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Respectfully submitted,

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